1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

which the crops are planted in the ashes among the stumps and charred logs (Plate 5, *b*). The field is usually ready to burn about three weeks after the start of the dry season and is allowed to burn for about a week. In the planting women assist the men. Two implements are used, the hoe (sambá) of iron, which is obtained in trade, and the digging stick, which is merely a long pole three to four inches in diameter and five to eight feet long with a sharpened end. The latter implement is held in both hands and driven repeatedly into the ground to make a hole in which to plant such things as plantain. The hoe is used for loosening the ground preparatory to planting cassava shoots, maize, and similar crops. Cassava of the "bitter" or "poisonous" variety (*Manihot utilissima*) is the staple vegetable product of the Caribs. It is propagated by inserting young sticks cut from mature cassava plants into the ground at an angle. Each stick must have several shoots or buds and must show milk when it is cut. Cassava growing in the field is known as mainyá; the root of the cassava is called kiédi; and baked cassava bread ready to eat is arépa. After planting, the young cassava is weeded for a few weeks, following which it requires no further care until the roots are ready to be dug, which usually is the case after about nine months. The weeding is done by women and children. Cassava is a perennial which will produce a second crop without further attention. The third crop is usually poor because of exhaustion of the soil.

The roots are pulled up or are dug with hoes by the women, who usually go to the field every two or three days to replenish their supplies. They are placed in walishas (a type of carrying basket) and brought back to the house, where they are first washed free of earth with water brought from the creek in a calabash or pot. Then they are peeled or scraped to remove the bark-like skin (Plate 6, *a*). This process is called ipityali (I scrape cassava). The white peeled roots are then washed again (Plate 7, *a*) and grated (Plate 6, *b*). The graters now used are made of tin perforated with a pattern of concentric circles of small holes punched with a nail (Plate 7, *b*). The obverse surface of the perforated tin is rough and is bent over a log into a convex shape much like a larger edition of the tin nutmeg grater which is used in American kitchens. The graters average about eighteen by eight inches, and when in use are fitted onto the convex surface of a

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

415 block of wood which preserves their shape. The block is made of
252 konta wood, and before the introduction of tin was studded with
[177] small points of quartz and used as a grater itself. In grating the woman sits on the ground with her legs folded under her and places the grater inside the concave surface of a semicylindrical trough made of one piece of bark. The grater leans against the side of the trough next to the operator with its long axis perpendicular to the long axis of the trough. The ends of the cylindrical roots of cassava are assiduously rubbed against the grater until the whole root is reduced to a white mash in the trough (Plate 6 *b*). When the grating is completed the matapi or cassava squeezer is taken down from the cross beam of the house on which it has
[285] been hanging (Plate 9, *a*). This ingenious device, which has been described numerous times by travelers in the Guianas and the Amazon country, is a tube of basketry woven by the men. When the tube is full it is suspended by a loop at its upper end from the end of a beam, while through the loop at the tube's inferior end a long pole is inserted. The end of the pole is caught under a cross beam tied for the purpose at the proper height to one of the uprights of the house. A long length of the pole protrudes through the loop on the opposite side and on this end the woman sits, so that the pole becomes a lever, actuated by the weight of the woman, for elongating the matapi. The leverage thus exerted elongates the tube, reducing its diameter and exerting on the contents a strong pressure which squeezes out the juice of
[263] the cassava mash. The juice (eshúru) drips into a pot placed below the inferior end of the matapi and is later boiled to make cashidípyo (Creole, cassarip), used for flavoring the Carib national dish, "pepper pot." The poisonous principle in the cassava juice, hydrocyanic acid, is freed by boiling.

251 The squeezing of the cassava mash usually occupies several hours. After the juice has been completely expressed the mash, now in the shape of a long cylindrical cake, is removed from the matapi and placed on the cross beams of the house, above the fire, to be smoked. It is believed that unsmoked cassava is harsh and causes one to choke in eating it. As cassava bread is made from day to day, the required amount of the cylindrical cake is broken off and pulverized into meal and sifted through a basketry sifter into a basketry tray (Plate 8, *a*).

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354 A sort of lamp or taper is sometimes made of beeswax and cotton. (Lamp, kororeta; beeswax, wawapone.) Yarn is taken from a discarded cotton hammock and made into a coil, which is encased in melted beeswax. The yarn serves as a wick.

417 352 [251] An adjunct of the house furniture is the drying rack (Carib, aripapone; creole, babracote). On the drying rack, meat is smoked over the fire. Drying racks are also erected outside the house for the purpose of airing and sun-drying cassava bread, split squashes, peppers, and other food. Only two of the patterns mentioned by Roth occur in the Barama country.[1] The three-stick type (Plate 18, *b*) is made with three sticks stuck into the ground like a tripod, with their tops tied together; about halfway from the ground they support a horizontal frame or rack. The four-upright type is a rectangular horizontal frame or grill supported on four upright forked sticks (Plate 13, *a*). The drying racks may vary in height and size and, as stated, may be situated inside or outside the house. Their several parts are tied together with bush-rope.

343 [341] As illustrated in the description and plan of the village of Sawari (Figs. 9–12), various subsidiary buildings and out-houses may be associated with the family dwelling. These serve the purposes of kitchen, storehouses, or drink houses, as the case may be. They are always four-pillar types of less elaborate construction than the dwelling itself, although the design may vary from one of the temporary benab types to the simpler forms of house design, usually without wall plates. Sometimes such a subsidiary house is a former dwelling converted into an outhouse when a newer and more elaborate dwelling is constructed. A structure to which every family aspires is a drink house (kanu'eti). Such a building shelters the kanu, or cassiri barrel, a large trough hollowed out of a single log, in which the drink is allowed to "set," and from which it is served at sprees. Families unfortunate enough not to possess a kanu use large pottery jars for holding the drink. In this case the jars are kept in the dwelling house, no special structure being necessary.

[415]

231 136 Numerous wild animals are regularly kept about the house as pets. Among the most important of these is the warakabra, a fowl with the iridescent plumage of a peacock and the abbreviated rump of a guinea hen; these birds set up a warning scream upon

[1] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, pp. 276–277.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

364 quickly cleared away by insects. As a matter of fact, decaying organic matter about a settlement is not as much of a problem as might be expected, since any such rubbage is quickly disposed of by the swarms of ants which appear from nowhere as if for this very purpose.

514 Each household has its own latrine in the bush near the house. A tree is cut down, on which one squats. Personal cleaning is done with a stick. Men urinate in a standing position, women squatting. The functions of elimination are performed in strict privacy except at sprees when people are drunk.

For a general picture of a Carib village and the relative economic status of its inhabitants as shown by possessions kept in their houses, the reader is referred to our discussion of the village of Sawari.

CONTAINERS FOR LIQUIDS

● 415 In this chapter we shall devote ourself to a brief survey of the several types of vessels used by the Caribs which are capable of holding liquids. Basketry is described elsewhere.

317 **Pottery.**[1] Clay for the making of pottery is obtained in a variety of locations. The best clay is found, however, in the beds of creeks, near their upper reaches, where the force of the water has not been sufficient to overlay the material with deposits of stone and rubble.

323 [462] The making of pottery is woman's work, and the women seek the supplies of clay when it is needed. No special time of year or month is necessarily reserved for this purpose, although the dry season is most auspicious because at that time it is more convenient to go into the bush in search of supplies, and also the drying of the clay and baking of the pots can be more dextrously handled. Furthermore, during high water the beds of clay are frequently submerged. The clay is dug moist and brought back to the house in walishas. It is usually deposited on the rack or loft and allowed to dry, a process which may require a couple of weeks.

[412] When it is dry the clay is pounded into a powder with a wooden club. Apparently, natural ingredients are relied upon for temper-

[1] tumai'ini, pottery making; arinyo, pottery clay.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

323 has not been well dried." The proper amount of fuel must be judged at the start of the firing process. Further fuel cannot be added during the firing, as this also is said to cause the pot to crack, presumably because it interferes with the gradual rise and fall of temperature which is necessary to prevent sudden expansion and contraction.

[824] After the pot is cold, aporokune juice (unidentified) is applied inside and out. The juice, or gum, is applied raw with the hand. Then the pot is again mildly heated, and the gum is melted and can be observed running over it and seeping into the pores. It is said that if the gum is not applied, the pot soaks water and breaks. The aporokune gum gives a varnished or glazed appearance to a new pot. With use, however, the sheen disappears. For glazing, the juice of the inside bark of the tree is used, but for painting decorative designs, the juice of the outer bark is used.

323 531 Crude unformalized designs may be painted on the pot over the glaze. Whether or not a pot is painted depends upon the pride which the potter takes in her work. For this purpose, as already stated, the juice of the outside bark of the aporokune is used. It is made thick, and colored by mixing with lamp black. No other pigment is used. Different shades of brown may be produced in this manner. Clay of white, red, or gray color occurs in different vicinities throughout the area. The variety of clay color, combined with the painted designs, provides a limited diversity of decoration.

Occasionally a band of criss-cross or herring-bone decorative incisions is made around the pot a few inches from the lip. I saw no specimens in which this type of decoration took any other form. The Caribs use no other methods of decoration on their pottery than those already mentioned.

[286] Sometimes the pot is enclosed in a net of nibi plaiting, which fits closely to the surface of the vessel, and provides attachments for hanging the pot.

323 415 Plate 19, *a*, shows the various types of pots made by the Barama Caribs. These patterns may vary in size but remain essentially the same in outline. The tumai'ene (No. 1)[1] is the "buck pot," in which meat and that savory mess called pepper pot are cooked over the fire. The tuku'arimi (No. 2) is a sort of flask, always

[1] Read from left to right in Plate 19, *a*.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

rather small, in which cassarip is kept. The pyatomene (No. 3) is used as a mixing bowl. The karupu (No. 4) is a handy container for all liquids which are being used in household processes, such as the water used in pottery making, the cane juice used in mixing cassiri, etc. Nos. 5 and 6 are variants of the tumai'ene type; the small tansepake tumai'eneme (No. 5) is frequently used as a container for crushed peppers. The tukuwari (No. 7) is the large jug in which cassiri and other drinks are set to ferment when they are made in small quantities or when the family does not have the use of a wooden cassiri barrel. The tuliwa (No. 8) is used for boiling any large mess; practically speaking, its most usual use is for boiling the mash of the various kinds of alcoholic drinks preparatory to setting them for fermentation. The uses of these several kinds of pots are further illustrated in the other photographs of Carib house life.

Calabashes. The several types of calabash vessels are illustrated in Plate 19, *b*. Generally speaking, these vessels are used for two purposes, drinking and storage of liquids. The open, semi-spherical types are used as drinking mugs. The closed types, with small holes cut in the shoulders or necks, are used as containers for drinking water and other liquids. Calabashes having long necks are sometimes carried on the trail as water flasks, in which case a small hole is bored through the upper part of the neck, through which a cord is passed. The carrying of water on the trail is infrequent, however, because creeks are fairly numerous in the bush.

In preparing the calabash vessels, the fruit or gourd is picked when completely ripe, the shell cut to suit the purpose to which it is to be put, and the pap removed. The gourd is sometimes boiled whole to loosen the pap. It is then dried in the sun or about the house until it is tough and hard. Aporokune juice is sometimes applied to the exterior, but I observed no examples of painting or other decoration.

In covering the mouth of either a calabash or a pottery jug, old rags may be used, or one pot may be turned upside down over the mouth of another. These methods prevent the entrance of insects, a purpose which is also accomplished by placing a thick layer of fresh clean grass over the mouth of the vessel. To stop the mouth of a flask which is being carried on the trail, a tight bunch of grass is firmly wedged into the opening.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

415 177 **Imported Containers.** In many of the villages which maintain contact with the trading posts, European utensils and containers are to be found. The "sauce pan," a small tin pail of about one quart capacity, with a lid, is issued as part of their regular equipment to wood cutters and other laborers who are employed by outsiders operating in the area. An enameled metal plate is similarly issued. Consequently, these utensils are to be found in households where the men have worked for outsiders.

The Caribs use no eating utensils of their own, but some families have obtained metal spoons in trade from the shops.

415 322 **Drink Barrel.** Every household aspires to the ownership of a kanu, which is illustrated in Plate 20, *b*. The kanu is used as a reservoir in which alcoholic drinks are fermented and from which they are served. The specimen illustrated has a capacity of about forty gallons. It is made from sorodani wood, the same which is popular for the making of korials. As can be seen, the vessel is made from one large log of wood, which has been hollowed out, and which has a pointed projection at each end. The excavating of the interior is accomplished by the same methods used in making korials. A depression is first hacked with an axe. This depression is then filled with hot coals from a fire, which are fanned so that they will char the wood as deeply as possible. Then the charred wood is removed with axe, knife, or cutlass, and the process repeated until a cavity of the proper size has been made. The [532] projections at the ends, which are exactly similar in form, are said to represent the head and tail, respectively, of the armadillo. The kanu, when filled with beverage, is covered by a piece of bark which protects the contents from insects and dirt. The whole [343] thing is kept in a specially constructed building, the kanu'eti.

Bamboo Containers. Only one type of bamboo container is used by the Caribs at present, an unguent pot in which is kept the face paint. These vessels are simply tubes of bamboo; the upper end is cut off below a node, leaving the container open at this end; the lower end is also cut off below a node, so that the septum of the node serves as the bottom of the container. On several [532] mens crude designs are scratched in the outer cortex of the bamboo, and on one of these was observed the only attempt to portray the human form in line which I discovered on the Barama.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

BASKETRY AND PLAITING

285 462 ALL basketry and plaiting is done by the men, and it is perhaps in this department of material culture that the most aesthetically pleasing products of Carib handiwork are produced.

314 824 Nibi, a slender bush-rope, and mokru, a reed-like plant which grows in the jungle, provide the principal materials for basketry and plaiting. Nibi (*Carludovica*) is a vine about as large in diameter 285 as a lead pencil. For use in plaiting it is first split in half; then the convex outer surface is split off from each piece, producing a flat, ribbon-like strip, which is at the same time pliable and tough. This strip is then scraped with a knife. The preparation of the mokru (*Ischnosiphon* sp.) is not unlike that described by Roth.[1]

285 412 415 Articles made of basketry or plait-work are the following: fans, sifters for cassava meal (Plate 8, *a*), trays (Plate 22, *b*), cassava squeezers, (Plate 9, *a*) walishas or carrying baskets (Plate 22, *a*), wallets (Plate 9, *a*), pegalls or clothing conta[illegible]uakes or general utility openwork baskets. Fiber trusses are also sometimes attached to pots to facilitate their handling.

285 531 Fans are of the design and type of manufacture illustrated and described by Roth.[2] Sifters are usually of the type figured by Roth.[3] The simple diagonal design is produced by twilled weaving. Also a twilled design is produced giving the effect of a series of concentric squares with their corners pointing toward the middle of each side of the sifter. This type is known as the "turtle-back" design, the squares resembling the markings on the shell of the bush turtle. Other designs are produced by using artificially colored elements in the weaving, usually red and black. The entire surface of the sifter may be divided into four quarters by a cross of red or of black. Another design consists of a series of evenly spaced red dots over the entire surface, produced by the use of a red element. The weaving technique used in all cases is twill. The framework of the sifter is usually of yarriyarri. The basketry is attached to the frame as in Roth (Plate 21, *b*).[4]

415 285 531 Trays are used mainly as containers for raw cotton which is being spun. Occasionally cassava meal and other loose articles

[1] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, p. 137.
[2] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, p. 206.
[3] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, Plate 71, A.
[4] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, Plate 70, B.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

285 531 415 are kept in them. They are all of the square variety with rims and rail edging, as figured in Roth.[1] Twilled weaving is used, and aside from designs in one color, designs are also produced by using elements which expose the outer or brown surface alternately with those which expose the inner or light surface. The rim of the tray usually extends below the bottom of the container, serving thus as a rest which elevates the contents above the ground. In some cases wooden legs are attached at each of the four corners.

The cassava squeezer is manufactured in the manner described by Roth.[2] Two types of design are used on the tube, illustrated in Plate 9, *a*. The two examples at the right bear the kushi-ant design and suggest lines of these insects as they are sometimes observed on the trunks of trees. The specimen at the left in the illustration is the akuri-tooth design, the repetition of the two short parallel motifs suggesting the two upper incisor teeth of that animal. The dark elements of these designs are produced by weaving elements, the outer, or unscraped, sides of which are exposed.

The walisha or carrying basket is of two types, permanent and temporary. The permanent type resembles that figured by Roth,[3] composed of doubled hexagonal wickerwork on a rectangular wooden frame. The temporary type is constructed of bush-rope 415 on an oval hoop of wood, and can be made in haste by a traveller 285 in the bush. Both types are supplied with shoulder straps of 482 bush-rope and a forehead strap of the same material. Loads of eighty pounds can be carried in these pack baskets. The load is placed in the basket and covered with broad banana or plantain leaves to protect it from rain. Then the two sides of the basket are laced together with bush-rope, as closely as possible, along the sides and top, to prevent the load from becoming dislodged. When the load is set down on the trail the projecting inferior ends of the two upright sticks of the frame keep the bottom off the ground, and the entire pack is leaned against a stick stuck into the ground.

Wallets are used for carrying small personal belongings, such as tobacco or beads. I did not see the process of manufacture of any of these articles.

415 285 Pegalls are square baskets made in two halves, one of which telescopes into the other. They are made in the manner described

[1] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, Plate 97, B.
[2] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, pp. 282–286.
[3] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, Plate 118, F.

1: Gillin 5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

by Roth,[1] although the design in the weaving is confined to square and rectangular figures produced by twilled technique. They are used for storing clothing and personal effects, and are usually kept closed by a cord which is tied securely around both halves.

A variety of quakes, or general utility baskets (kuru kuru), are in use. They are practically all open wickerwork of the hexagonal pattern, without decoration (Plate 22, *a*). They all have hexagon bases, and the details of their construction may be obtained in Roth.[2] Occasionally these baskets are provided with handles. They are for the most part used for storing cassava and other vegetable products.

No other basketry or plaited articles than those described above were observed on the Barama. Fish traps and basketry water bottles, found in other parts of the colony, are not in use here.

Feather-working. This is not one of the arts of the Barama Caribs. Feathers are used on arrows, they are stuck in the hair occasionally as decoration, tufts of feathers may be used in making decorative pendants, and tufts of white powis down are sometimes stuck with honey to the forehead as decoration, but elaborate headdresses, armlets, and so forth, made of feathers, are not to be found in this region.

TRANSPORTATION

THE Caribs have no beasts of burden or wheeled vehicles, so that all transportation depends in the last analysis upon the strength and endurance of the human body.

Land Transport. On land all goods to be transported must be carried on human backs. Radiating from each settlement are a number of trails leading off into the bush, which are followed by men when hunting. Below the falls at Towakaima, the connection between different settlements is usually made by river. The village may be located from one to fifteen miles back from the river by trail, but to reach a neighboring settlement, it is necessary to take the path to the riverside and proceed by canoe to the landing place of the settlement which is to be visited. The three Kariako settlements and Parapimai are connected by trail, as are

[1] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, p. 345.
[2] Roth, 1924, *An Introductory Study of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs*, p. 322, ff.

1: Gillin B-6 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

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a. Breaking up a cylinder of cassava meal on the sifter, preparatory to sifting out the fine meal for baking bread.

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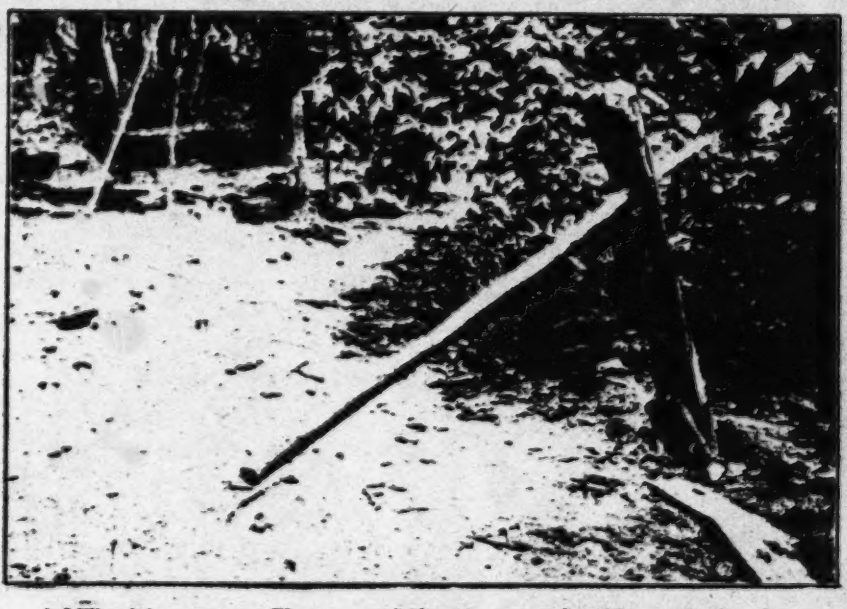

b. Mill or juice-extractor. The canes are laid one by one on the table or projecting piece of wood under the lever. The juice flows down to the point where it falls into a pot on the ground.

(End plate 8)

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1: Gillin E-5 (1933-35) 1936 SS9 Carib SS9

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a, Three matapi, basketry tubes used for extracting the poisonous juice from the grated cassava.

b, Women's costumes typical of settlements removed from supply of trade cloth.

[End plate 9]

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a, Types of pots. From left to right: tumai'ene; tuku'arimi; pyotomeme; karupu; tumai'ene; tumai'ene; tukuwari; tuliwa.

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b, Vessels made of calabashes.

[End plate 19]

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a. A typical collection of large pots. Note rags used to cover the mouths, also wicker binding on outside of certain specimens to facilitate carrying them.

b. Drink barrel used for fermenting ensdri and other beverages.

[End plate 20]

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a, Carrying baskets.

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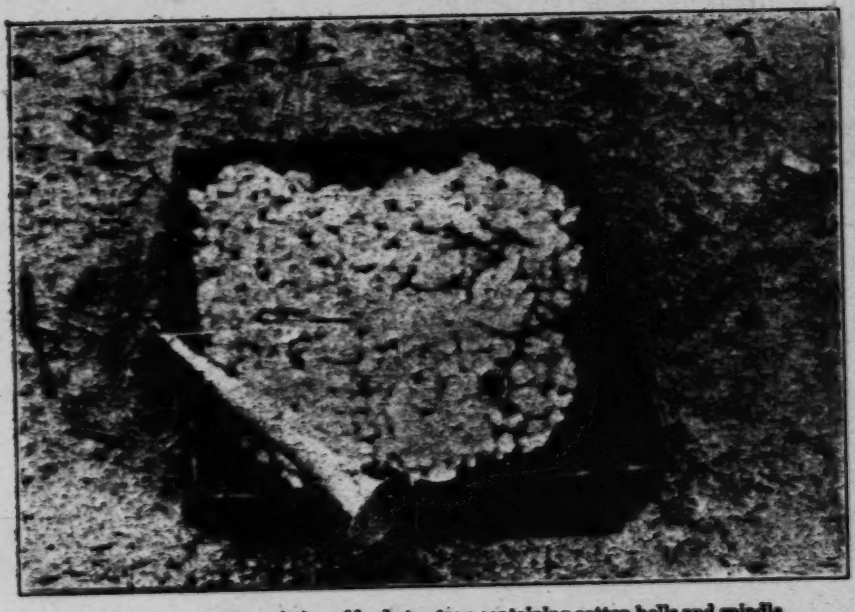

b, Spinning outfit consisting of basketry tray containing cotton bolls and spindle.

(End plate 22)

*177 439 Throughout the time period under consideration, commercial trade goods have been incorporated, mostly by way of substitution for their [412] local equivalent. Axeheads, cutlasses, knives, iron griddle pans, [415] cotton cloth, and shotguns reached the population in varying degrees [195] at the time of Gillin's study (1934:332). These trade goods did not lose their popularity. They have been added to by other external resources and their quantity and availability have been increased. [163] Eventually, a flow of external goods and services into the Upper [61] Barama River area has resulted in an increased birth rate and an [511] increasing population size, an improved standard of living, and [62] changes in the social organization of the population.

*177 175 443 [484] However, markets have been introduced and controlled by external agents. As has already been explained, the Upper Barama River Caribs do not have easy access to regional markets. They do not travel to transact regional exchanges. Rather, they have depended on the opportunities provided by non-Carib middlemen who reside in the Upper Barama River area and who have good access to the limited transportation and communication facilities. As characteristic of the conveyance of regional exchanges into remote areas, market opportunities have been highly personalized. This was characteristic of the early period of porknocking activities and the existence of the gold [657] companies. Personalized market networks continue to be associated with government programs and services at Baramita Air Strip.

*177 195 437 439 Market Opportunities Provided by the Early Gold Seekers

The earliest regional exchanges reported for these Caribs involved